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OSA-1155-63
28 February 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT : The Chronology of Events Leading to the Transfer of Cuban Overflight Responsibility

1. On 9 October 1962 in an augmented session of the Special Group approval was granted for a U-2 overflight of Cuba. There has been no distribution of the minutes recorded from that meeting. After the formal meeting adjourned a question was raised by the Air Force and DOD members concerning the adequacy of the cover story and the desirability of changing it from a Lockheed ferry flight enroute to Puerto Rico to that of a routine Air Force peripheral surveillance mission. Following this discussion Mr. McCone and Mr. Gilpatric met with higher authority regarding the type of cover story to be employed.

2. On 11 October 1962 the Cover Committee met in Dr. Charyk's office. Dr. Scoville agreed that in the long run the cover story stating, in case of mishap, that the mission was a routine Air Force peripheral surveillance mission, was probably the better of the two. Dr. Scoville emphasized that a SAC pilot should not be used until he had received adequate training. There was no conclusion reached as to what organization should control and command the mission, i.e., CIA or SAC. Dr. Charyk then called Secretary Gilpatric who in turn contacted the DCI. Dr. Scoville was informed that the DCI had agreed to SAC 'running' the mission. Dr. Scoville returned to the office and advised the DCI of the fact that the SAC pilots were not current in the J-75 configured U-2. The Director telephoned Secretary Gilpatric and stated that he would not agree to a SAC mission unless the pilot was thoroughly trained. Apparently immediately following Mr. McCone's earlier concurrence, Secretary Gilpatric advised Mr. McGeorge Bundy that Mr. McCone had agreed that the mission would be flown as a military flight with a SAC pilot.

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3. On 11 October Major Heyser, a SAC pilot arrived unannounced at the CIA detachment at Edwards Air Force Base.

4. On 11 October in a meeting with the DCI, DDCI, DD/R and DAD/OSA it was decided that if the operation was to be covert then the mission would be flown by CIA under the existing procedures. However, if the operation was to be overt, then the mission would be flown by a U.S. Air Force pilot in uniform.

5. On 12 October CIA was advised by Secretary Gilpatric that approval had been granted by higher authority for SAC to fly the Cuban mission.

6. On 12 October SAC received cable authorization from USAF HQS to execute the Cuban mission from North Edwards Air Force Base.

7. On 12 October Dr. Scoville telephoned Mr. Bundy to register his caution against using a SAC pilot until he had been adequately trained.

8. On 13 October in a telephone conversation with Secretary Gilpatric, Dr. Scoville again stressed his concern that the pilot be adequately trained before a mission. He further stated that the NRO had not consulted CIA and in fact had made decisions without consulting or advising those (CIA) who were responsible. Following this conversation Dr. Charyk called Dr. Scoville and agreed that he would not approve of a SAC mission unless the pilot had received adequate training. It should be noted that the training syllabus which CIA felt necessary for J-75 training of the SAC pilots consisted of ground school for eight classroom hours, one transition flight of two hours including practice landings, takeoffs and airwork, a second daytime flight line of four hours, and a third flight of 5 hours at night employing celestial navigation. SAC, however, launched Major Heyser on the 14 October mission with only three hours and forty-five minutes recurrency flight check at low altitude.

9. On 13 October General Carter, as Acting DCI, forwarded the memorandum to the Honorable McGeorge Bundy confirming the

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transfer of command and control responsibility for Cuban U-2 reconnaissance flights from CIA to SAC on 12 October. General Carter recorded his objections that the decision for the change in the cover story was interpreted to require an immediate and complete disruption of our established operating procedures. General Carter attached for Mr. Bundy's signature a memorandum directing the subject transfer.

10. On 13 October McGeorge Bundy forwarded a memorandum to the Deputy Secretary of Defense and to the Acting Director of Central Intelligence which confirmed that the responsibility for the Cuban overflight had been vested in the Department of Defense. He pointed out, however, that in his judgment the responsibility for that mission was not to be regarded as a binding precedence and that the whole question of roles and responsibilities would be reviewed by the appropriate special group and presented to higher authority for decision.

11. On 14 October the overflight mission was launched from Edwards Air Force Base and recovered at McCoy Air Force Base after a successful overflight.

12. On 15 October General Power, CINC SAC, called the CIA Detachment commander to express his appreciation for CIA's excellent support in preparation of our U-2 for the 14 October mission. Major General Compton and Major General Wilson also phoned their compliments and appreciation.

13. At a meeting at the White House on the morning of 15 October there was a discussion and approval of two additional overflights of Cuba to be performed under SAC command and control. The additional flights were approved by higher authority. Immediately thereafter a second meeting was held in Mr. Bundy's office consisting of Mr. Bundy, Mr. McCone, Mr. Gilpatric, Mr. Alexis Johnson, General Taylor, and General Carter. There was a general discussion of all of the facets of command and control for overflight operations as well as a discussion of cover plans. After thorough-going exchanges of views, General Taylor suggested that command and control should be returned to the Central Intelligence Agency and that the military pilots required be furnished by SAC. He further suggested that the overall coordination of all reconnaissance flights be handled by a single coordinating agency,

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possibly SAC. Mr. Gilpatric agreed but thought that NRO should be the coordinating agency. After further discussion it was the general consensus of the entire group (with the exception of Mr. Johnson who did not express himself) that the CIA complex for overflight operations would remain intact and would exercise command and control of Cuban military overflights executed by that complex; that SAC would furnish the military pilots to CIA for CIA's use; that NRO would be the coordinating agency for all Cuban reconnaissance, this to include CIA capabilities, SAC capabilities, and CINCLANT capabilities. It was agreed that Dr. Charyk would study the entire problem and come up with a recommended plan. Dr. Charyk was not directed to limit himself to the above concept -- it was the consensus of all present, however, that this concept was the one that appeared most workable and most likely to provide national intelligence objectives.

14. On 16 October, since the overflights of Cuba had reached outright overt nature, it was decided by higher authority that for the present, U-2 reconnaissance of Cuba would continue under SAC direction and command control.

HERBERT SCOVILLE, JR.
Deputy Director
(Research)

cc: DDCI
Exec Dir
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